

14. (Previously Amended) A method of permitting an author of an electronic document to simultaneously check both the spelling and meaning of words in such document comprising the steps of:

- [a] retrieving a word to be spell checked and word checked from said document; and
- [b] determining whether said word has been spelled correctly; and
- [c] when said word has been spelled incorrectly, presenting a first list of alternative words to said user as replacements for said word, and permitting said author to select a first replacement word for said word; and
- [d] determining whether the meaning of said word or replacement word has a designation as offensive and/or potentially inappropriate for use in a text document, said designation being modifiable by the author; and
- [e] when said word has been designated as offensive and/or potentially inappropriate, presenting a second list of alternative words to said author as replacements for said word, and permitting said author to select a second replacement word for said word.

B2 21. (Twice amended) The method of claim 14, further including a step of permitting an author to change the value of [the] a status flag for such word.

24. (Previously Amended) A method of word checking an electronic document generated by a word processing program under control of a user of said program, said method comprising the steps of:

- storing word-checking status information for said document, including a table identifying offensive and/or potentially inappropriate words used in said document;
- monitoring interaction between said user and said word processing program to identify idle editing periods;
- locating offensive and/or potentially inappropriate words in said document during the idle editing periods, and updating the word checking status information in response thereto as needed; and
- modifying a word filter electronic dictionary containing said offensive and/or potentially inappropriate words based on input from the user, so that the user can control which words in said document are to be identified in said table.

29. (Twice Amended) A method of automatically word checking an electronic document as it is generated by a user and before such electronic document is published, comprising the steps of:

allowing the user to specify one or more word filter dictionaries to be used for filtering text content of the document, where at least one of said one or more word filter dictionaries is selected based on an intended audience for the electronic document; and

monitoring data input by the user during a data input period that is intended to be included as a word in said document; and

determining whether the word is offensive and/or potentially inappropriate for use in said document by comparing the word against words contained in said one or more word filter dictionaries; and

when the word is determined to be offensive and/or potentially inappropriate, alerting the user; and

wherein a result of said word checking is communicated to the user while the user is still entering said text content of the document so that the electronic document is checked before it is disseminated to said intended recipient and so as to control initial distribution of such electronic document.

36. (Twice Amended) A method of generating an electronic version of a language filter dictionary comprising the steps of:

inputting data in electronic form to create a set of words in computer readable form for the dictionary; and

providing a first dictionary, which first dictionary is a first part of the language filter dictionary, for identifying each word in said set of words that has a meaning that is potentially inappropriate for use in communications with a first group of persons;

providing a second dictionary, which second dictionary is separate from said first electronic dictionary and also forms a second part of the language filter dictionary, for identifying each word in said set of words that has a meaning that is potentially inappropriate for use in communications with a second group of persons.

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40. (Twice amended) An electronic system for permitting a user to control which words are allowed in an electronic document before the electronic document is published, said system including:

a system memory for storing a word checking software module;
a processing device for executing the word checking software module;
an electronic dictionary for identifying a set of filter words to be filtered from the electronic documents, said set of filter words including both offensive words and/or potentially inappropriate words, and which potentially inappropriate words are determined by considering an identity of an audience intended to receive the electronic document; and
wherein the word checking software module is configured such that it can perform the following operations:

- (i) retrieving words to be checked from the document;
- (ii) determining whether said words from the document include any from said set of filter words
- (iii) controlling initial distribution of such electronic document based on steps (i) and (ii).

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46. (Twice Amended) The system of claim 41, wherein the word checking software module is configured such that it can perform the additional operation of permitting said user to change the value of [the] a status flag for words in said electronic dictionary.

53. (Twice amended) An article of manufacture comprising:

an electronic dictionary including a set of words and a plurality of associated status fields for said set of words, each status field identifying an appropriateness rating for a particular audience for individual words in said set of words, such that an individual word can have a plurality of appropriateness ratings;

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a word checking routine executable by a computing device and for checking whether words in an unpublished electronic text document should be included in a communication to a particular audience, and which routine is configured to perform the following operations:

[a] retrieving a word to be word checked from said electronic text document; and

[b] accessing the electronic dictionary to determine whether appropriateness rating of said word identified in a status field for said particular audience exceeds a threshold value specified for such document; and

[c] controlling an initial dissemination of such document based on checking said word;

wherein the electronic dictionary and word checking routine are embodied in a computer readable media.

61. (Previously amended) A system for permitting a user to check the meaning of words in an electronic document, said system including:

a computer readable storage structure for storing a word checking software module, such module being incorporated as part of a word processing program that can be executed by a computer processing device;

wherein the word checking software module is configured such that when it is executed by the computer processing device it can perform the following operations:

- (i) retrieving said words to be checked from said document;
- (ii) determining whether said word is inadvertently included and has a particular meaning that has been designated as potentially inappropriate for use in said document; and
- (iii) alerting a user to the presence of said word when it is designated as potentially inappropriate; and
- (iv) allowing a user to modify said word in said document when it is designated as potentially inappropriate before transmitting said document to a third party; and
- (v) allowing a user of said word checking software module to specify a rating value for a word to be used in determining whether such word is potentially inappropriate.

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72. (Twice Amended) An electronic dictionary embodied in computer readable form for use in controlling distribution of unpublished electronic documents created by a word processing program, said dictionary including:

a set of words represented in computer readable form;

a first electronic dictionary incorporated as part of the electronic dictionary and being used for defining a first filter identifying any word in said set of words that is offensive; and

a second electronic dictionary separate from said first electronic dictionary and also incorporated as part of the electronic dictionary, said second electronic dictionary being customized for defining a second filter [and being used] for identifying any word in said set of words that is potentially inappropriate for use in communications with a particular group of persons.

76. (Previously Amended) A method of checking the meaning of a word in an electronic document comprising the steps of:

- retrieving said word to be checked from the document;
- determining with a first electronic language filter whether said word has a particular meaning that is likely to be offensive to persons intended to read such document; and
- determining with a second electronic language filter whether said word is potentially inappropriate for use in communications to said persons, based in part on considering an identity of said persons.

93. (Amended) A method of checking content of an unpublished electronic document comprising the steps of:

- (a) specifying a language filter to be used for inspecting words of the electronic document to determine if it contains potentially inappropriate content, said language filter being based in part on an identity of an intended recipient of the electronic document; and
- (b) specifying a language sensitivity threshold level to be used when evaluating the electronic document; and
- (c) providing an output indicating when said language sensitivity threshold is exceeded based on words in the electronic document so as to control initial distribution of such electronic document to said intended recipient.

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97. (Amended) A system for checking content of an unpublished electronic document comprising:

a computer readable storage structure for storing a word checking software module that can be executed by a computer processing device; and

a language filter, which language filter is associated with a set of words that are potentially inappropriate for use with a corresponding recipient of the electronic document; and

wherein the word checking software module is configured such that when it is executed by the computer processing device it can perform the following operations:

- (i) Specifying said language filter for checking the electronic document;
- (ii) specifying a language sensitivity threshold level to be used when evaluating the electronic document;
- (iii) providing an output indicating when said language sensitivity threshold is exceeded based on words in the electronic document so as to control initial distribution of such electronic document to said intended recipient.

101. (As filed) A method of controlling distribution of an electronic document to prevent dissemination of embarrassing and/or harmful content in such electronic document, the method comprising the steps of:

- a) identifying offensive words that should not be included in an electronic document to be distributed to an intended third party recipient; and
- b) identifying potentially inappropriate words that should not be included in an electronic document to be distributed to said intended third party recipient, said potentially inappropriate words being based in part on a consideration of an identity of said intended third party recipient; and
- c) inspecting the document electronically before it is distributed to said intended third party recipient to see if it contains any of said offensive and/or potentially inappropriate words, so that a corrective action can be taken to eliminate said offensive and/or potentially inappropriate words and/or to prevent distribution of the document.

105. (As filed) A method of controlling language content of an electronic document, the method comprising the steps of:

- (a) defining a word as offensive by specifying a first rating value for a first status field associated with said word in an electronic dictionary; and
- (b) defining a word as potentially inappropriate for communication with an intended recipient of the electronic document by specifying a second rating value for a second status field associated with said word in said electronic dictionary, said second rating value being based in part on a consideration of a gender, language use and/or ethnicity of said particular recipient; and
- (c) entering text words for the language content of the electronic document; and
- (d) selecting whether said first status field and/or said second status field in said electronic dictionary should be used for examining said text words; and
- (e) reviewing the text words in accordance with step (d) to determine if any context restricted words are contained in the electronic document, said context restricted words including text words that are offensive and/or potentially inappropriate as defined in steps (a) and (b); and
- (f) identifying any context restricted words in the electronic document before such document is transmitted to said intended recipient so that said context restricted words can be modified or eliminated.

109. (Amended) A system for checking the word content of an unpublished electronic document, the system including:

a computer readable storage structure for storing a word checking software module that can be executed by a computer processing device;

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an electronic dictionary for storing dictionary words that can be used in the electronic document, said electronic dictionary being set up such that one or more status fields can be associated with such dictionary words, said status fields containing a rating for an offensiveness and/or inappropriateness of such dictionary word for a corresponding audience;

wherein the word checking software module is configured such that when it is executed by the computer processing device it can perform the following operations:

- (i) selecting one or more language filters based on identifying which of said one or more status fields for said electronic dictionary words is/are to be used for checking words in the document;
- (ii) using said one or more language filters to check words used in the document against corresponding dictionary words by examining said rating in said status field(s);
- (iii) generating an alert when said one or more language filters detects a word that has a rating that indicates it is offensive and/or inappropriate for a corresponding audience;

wherein publication of the electronic document can be controlled so that when disseminated to third parties it [to] only includes words that do not have a rating that indicates that such word is offensive and/or inappropriate for a corresponding audience.

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115. (Amended) A method of checking content of an electronic document which has not been published comprising the steps of:

- (a) configuring a language filter to be used for inspecting content of the electronic document to determine if it contains potentially inappropriate text, said language filter being configured based in part on an identity of intended recipients of the electronic document; and
- (b) detecting whether said electronic document includes words specified within said language filter; and
- (c) generating an output indicating the presence of any words detected during step (b) so that the electronic document is checked before it is disseminated to said intended recipients and so as to control initial publication of such electronic document;

wherein said language filter can be adjusted during step (a) as needed according to said identity of said intended recipients.

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118. (Amended) A method of checking content of an electronic document that has not been published comprising the steps of:

- (a) retrieving a word from the electronic document;
- (b) inspecting said word with a language filter selected for the electronic document, said language filter consisting of either or both of a first language filter and/or a second language filter, said first language filter being associated with words that are potentially inappropriate for use in connection with a first group of persons, and said second language filter being associated with words that are potentially inappropriate for use in connection with a second group of persons;

wherein a decision to [disseminate] initially distribute the electronic document, including to said first group of persons or said second group of persons, is based on a result of step (b).

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123. (Amended) A system for checking content of an electronic document, which electronic document has not been published, the system including:

a computer readable storage structure for storing a word checking software module that can be executed by a computer processing device;

a configurable language filter, which language filter contains words to be used for checking the content of the electronic document;

wherein the word checking software module is configured such that when it is executed by the computer processing device it can perform the following operations:

- (i) configuring said configurable language filter based in part on an identity of an intended recipient of the electronic document;
- (ii) using said configurable language filter to check words used in the document;
- (iii) generating an alert when said configurable language filter is triggered;

wherein initial dissemination of the electronic document can be controlled based on whether the content is appropriate for an intended audience of such electronic document.

126. (As filed) A system for checking content of an electronic document including:

a computer readable storage structure for storing a word checking software module that can be executed by a computer processing device;

a language filter consisting of a first language filter and a second language filter, said first language filter being associated with words that are potentially inappropriate for use in connection with a first group of persons, and said second language filter being associated with words that are potentially inappropriate for use in connection with a second group of persons;

wherein the word checking software module is configured such that when it is executed by the computer processing device it can perform the following operations:

- (i) selecting either or both of said first and second language filters for checking words in the document based in part on an identity of an intended recipient of the electronic document;
- (ii) using either or both of said first and/or second language filters to check words used in the document;
- (iii) generating an indicator when either or both of said first and/or second

language filters is triggered;
wherein dissemination of the electronic document can be controlled based on whether words contained therein are appropriate for an intended audience.

129. (As filed) A method of checking content of electronic documents comprising the steps of:
- (a) retrieving a word from a first electronic document; and
 - (b) inspecting said word with a language filter selected for the first electronic document, said language filter consisting of either or both of a first language filter and/or a second language filter, said first language filter being associated with words that are potentially inappropriate for use in connection with a first group of persons, and said second language filter being associated with words that are potentially inappropriate for use in connection with a second group of persons; and
 - (c) identifying whether said word falls within said first language filter and/or said second language filter; and
 - (d) repeating steps (a) through (c) for said first electronic document until all words in said first electronic document are inspected; and
 - (e) repeating steps (a) through (d) for a second electronic document, wherein a language filter selected for the second electronic document can be varied from that used for said first electronic document.

132. (As filed) A system for checking content of electronic documents including:

a computer readable storage structure for storing a word checking software module that can be executed by a computer processing device;

a language filter comprised of a first language filter and a second language filter, said first language filter being associated with words that are potentially inappropriate for use in connection with a first group of persons, and said second language filter being associated with words that are potentially inappropriate for use in connection with a second group of persons;

wherein the word checking software module is configured such that when it is executed by the computer processing device it can perform the following operations:

- (i) selecting either or both of said first and second language filters as said language filter for checking content of electronic documents such that said first language filter can be used when said electronic document is a first type of document to be disseminated to said first group of persons, while said second language filter can be used when said electronic document is a second type of document to be disseminated to said second group of persons;
- (ii) using said language filter to check words used in said electronic documents;
- (iii) generating an alert when said language filter is triggered;

wherein dissemination of said electronic documents, including both said first type of documents and said second type of documents, can be controlled based on whether the content therein is appropriate for an intended audience, including said first and second groups of persons.

135. (As filed) A method of inspecting and verifying content of electronic documents comprising the steps of:

- (a) providing one or more electronic documents whose contents are to be checked; and
- (b) providing a set of language filters, each of said language filters being associated with a set of words that are inappropriate for use with a corresponding recipient group for said one or more electronic documents; and
- (c) selecting one or more of said language filters based in part on an intended recipient group identified for each of said one or more documents; and
- (d) checking a content of said one or more electronic documents using any language filters selected for said one or more electronic documents respectively during step (c); and
- (e) identifying whether any of said one or more electronic documents contain words that trigger said selected language filters.

138. (As filed) A system for inspecting and verifying content of electronic documents including:

a computer readable storage structure for storing a word checking software module that can be executed by a computer processing device; and

a set of language filters, each of said language filters being associated with a set of words that are inappropriate for use with a corresponding recipient group for one or more electronic documents; and

wherein the word checking software module is configured such that when it is executed by the computer processing device it can perform the following operations:

- (i) selecting one or more of said language filters based in part on an intended recipient group identified for each of said one or more documents; and
- (ii) checking a content of said one or more electronic documents using any language filters selected for said one or more electronic documents respectively;
- (iii) identifying whether any of said one or more electronic documents contain words that trigger said selected language filters.

wherein said system can process electronic documents individually or as a batch.